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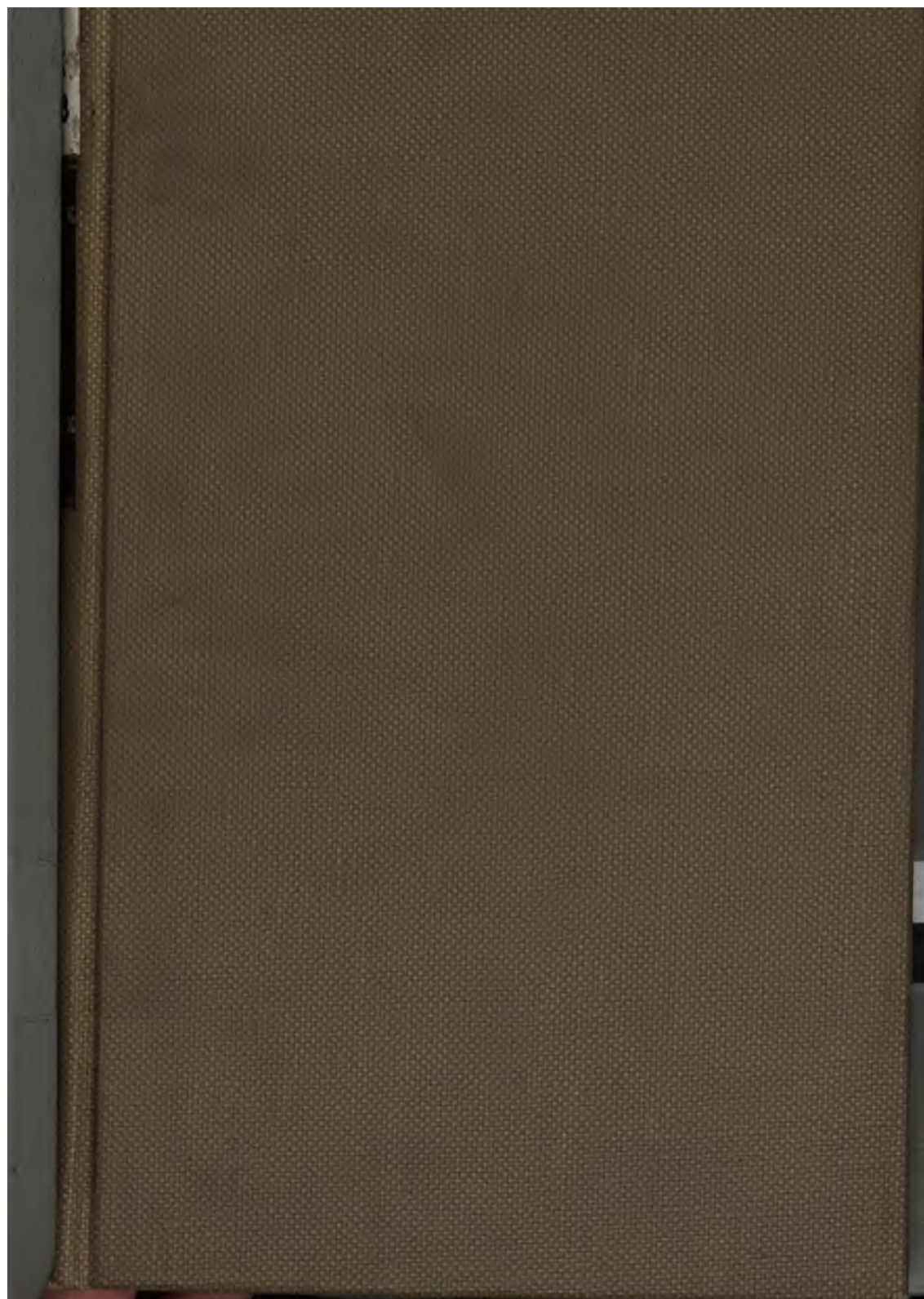
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Thomas OF THE *Church*
1850

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD IN NEW-YORK,

FOR THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

AND PARTS ADJACENT,

As Revised and Adapted, in the Sixth Month,

1810.

NEW-YORK:

MAHLON DAY, PRINTER,

NO. 374 PEARL-STREET.

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In order to avoid frequent repetitions, the masculine gender is generally made use of, which is meant to apply to either sex, as the case may require.

INTRODUCTION.

It appears by the Scriptures of truth, that in the morning of the gospel dispensation, the apostles and believers in Christ, found it expedient to meet together, for the purpose of divine worship, and for the promotion of the cause of righteousness; manifesting a godly care for the preservation one of another, that all might walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing, answerable to that precept of our Lord, "One is your master, even Christ; and all ye are Brethren."

But, in succeeding times, the usefulness of these meetings was much lessened by certain men, with selfish and sinister views, assuming authority, and exercising lordship over the flock. It, however, pleased the Almighty, after a long night of apostacy, to bring many out of that darkness, which had overspread the professors of the Christian religion, and, in process of time, to gather us to be a people, distinguished by peculiar principles and testimonies, which we believe to be consonant with the true meaning of the Scriptures, and the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

Agreeably to the practice of the primitive Christians, we believe it to be our duty, not only to meet

together for the worship of God, but, also, for the exercise of a christian care over each other, for the preservation of all in unity of faith and practice. For this important end, and as an exterior hedge of preservation, against the temptations and dangers to which we are exposed, the following Rules of Discipline are adopted for the government of Friends, overseers, and meetings, with a view, that, in the exercise thereof, the unfaithful, the immoral, and the libertine professors, may be seasonably reminded of their danger and of their duty; as well as of the labour which, in gospel love, hath been, from time to time, bestowed for their help and recovery; and that such as continue to reject the convictions of truth, and the counsel of their brethren, and refuse to be reclaimed, may be made sensible, that they themselves are the sole cause of their separation from our religious fellowship and communion. For when any, by their inconsistent or disorderly conduct, or by imbibing and adopting principles and practices contrary to the doctrines which we hold, have first openly manifested their disunity with the society, it is just and requisite, that, after endeavoring to restore them without effect, the body should testify its disunity with such erring and refractory members; at the same time earnestly desiring, that they may be convinced of the error of their ways, and that, through unfeigned repentance, and a consistent orderly conduct in future, they may be reunited. This being the utmost extent of our discipline respecting offenders, it is very evident that from the right exercise thereof, no degree of persecution or

imposition can be justly inferred ; for the imposition would rest entirely on the part of those, who might insist on being retained as members, whilst at open variance with the Body, either in principle or practice.

In the administration of the Discipline, it is our duty to treat with offenders, in tenderness and love, agreeably to apostolic advice, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness ; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." And according to gospel order, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone ; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother ; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established ; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church ; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

For the more regular and effectual support of the order of the Society, besides the usual meetings for the purpose of divine worship, others for the exercise of our Discipline are instituted, subordinate to each other, as, First—Preparative Meetings, which commonly consist of the members of a meeting for worship ; Secondly, Monthly Meetings, which generally consist of several Preparative Meetings ; Thirdly, Quarterly Meetings, consisting of several Monthly Meetings ; and Fourthly, The Yearly Meeting, consisting of all the Quarterly Meetings.

These Meetings have distinct allotments of service ;

and experience has abundantly shown, that, when they are attended in humility and the fear of the Lord, with a single eye to his honor, and the benefit and edification one of another, they do not require man to preside in them ; being favored with spiritual aid and direction from the Holy Head, by which Friends are preserved in harmony and christian condescension. It is, therefore, the indispensable duty of Friends, in their meetings for the exercise of the Discipline, humbly to wait for divine influence, which will endue with patience, and qualify them, in their several stations and movements, to build up one another in "that faith which works by love, to the purifying the heart."

"Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

FRIENDS are affectionately and pressingly advised, duly to attend all our public meetings, held for the solemn purpose of divine worship ; and carefully to avoid permitting any slight pretence or worldly business to occasion their absence from them ; or induce them to leave their children, or those placed under their care, engaged in their temporal concerns ; bearing in remembrance, that the solemn inquiry will be made, What hast thou done with those lambs committed to thy care ? Happy will it be for those who feel the supporting evidence, that they have endeavored, in preference to all other concerns, to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

When assembled, Friends should be diligent in waiting upon the Lord with fervent desires to be favored with the enjoyment of his life-giving presence, and to be preserved from wandering thoughts, and from a lukewarm and drowsy state. Thus, tender-hearted inquirers would be encouraged to come and partake, in our solemn assemblies, of that inward and spiritual refreshment, which is, at times, graciously imparted to the souls of the humbly devoted ; who are taught by experience, that faithfulness in devoting time to the attendance of religious Meetings, qualifies to fulfil, with more propriety, the duties they owe to God, to their families, and to mankind.

Those who frequently neglect, or do not seasonably attend our religious meetings, or go out and in, unnecessarily, or otherwise disturb them, should be cautioned and admonished: and parents and heads of families are exhorted to have a religious care, in these respects, over their children, and those who are under their tuition.

When any so manifest their want of love to God, and the unity of the brethren, as to continue to neglect the attendance of our religious meetings, and disregard the repeated advice of Friends, with respect to this incumbent duty, they are to be treated with by the monthly meeting to which they belong, and disowned, if their cases should appear to require it.

MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

MEETINGS for Discipline, having, by long experience been found of manifest benefit to those who are concerned to attend them, as well as to the Society at large, Friends are entreated to be diligent in this important duty, and to encourage the attendance of the youth who are of suitable age.

Meetings for Discipline are subordinate and accountable in the following manner ;—preparative meetings to the monthly meeting ; monthly meetings to the quarterly meeting ; and quarterly meetings to the yearly meeting.

No quarterly meeting is to be set up or discontinued, but by the yearly meeting ; no monthly meeting, but by the quarterly meeting ; no preparative meeting, or meeting for worship, but by the monthly meeting, with the approbation of the quarterly meeting : and if at any time the yearly meeting be dissatisfied with the proceedings of any of the said meetings, or a quarterly meeting, with the proceedings of any of its monthly meetings, or a monthly meeting, with the proceedings of any of its preparative meetings ; they are to render a full and clear account when required.

Each established meeting for worship, should be a preparative meeting, except in cases where the quarterly meeting shall judge it inexpedient.

Business from persons not of our society, should be brought to the preparative meeting by the overseers.

As the use and design of preparative meetings, are, in general, to prepare business for monthly meetings, Friends should be careful not to occasion unnecessary delay ; and preparative meetings are not to receive or disown members, nor decide in any case, which ought to claim the attention of monthly meetings : and each preparative meeting should keep a record of its proceedings.

After the case of an offender is brought to a meeting, he is not to attend any of our meetings for Discipline.

Each monthly meeting should appoint a treasurer, who is to keep a regular account of all monies received and paid on behalf of the meeting.

Monthly meetings should carefully endeavor to conclude such business as may come before them, without unnecessary delay ; but, should a monthly meeting find a subject too weighty or difficult to decide upon, it may be removed to the quarterly meeting, and, in like manner, after due care, the quarterly meeting may remove it to the yearly meeting ; except in a case where the privileges of an individual member are concerned, so as to affect his right of appeal ; in such an instance, provided a monthly meeting cannot decide, it may inform the quarterly meeting that a subject is before it, in which it desires assistance ; and the quarterly meeting should appoint a committee to sit with, and assist the monthly meeting, and report their attendance : the merits of the case not to be adverted to, either in their report, or in the application of the monthly meeting.

Records should be made in every monthly and quarterly meeting, of such matters as come before and are determined by them; and they should, in all cases, contain a clear and explicit narrative. Minutes and reports which are sent from one meeting to another, should be signed by the Clerk.

Business from preparative to monthly meetings, and from monthly to quarterly meetings, should, in general, be read at the opening of the respective meetings to which it is forwarded; together with the minutes of the preceding monthly or quarterly meeting.

If any quarterly meeting, request the records or minutes of another quarterly meeting, or any monthly meeting, those of another monthly meeting, it is directed that copies of such records or minutes, be accordingly communicated to the meeting requesting them.

It is advised, that, in general, two representatives be appointed by each preparative meeting, to attend the monthly meeting, unless the monthly meeting be composed of only one preparative meeting: each monthly meeting is to appoint two or more representatives, to attend the quarterly meeting; and at least four representatives should be appointed by each quarterly meeting, to attend the yearly meeting. Representatives are to present to the meetings they are appointed to attend, such business as shall be given them in charge, which shall be in writing. It is earnestly desired, that representatives weightily consider the importance of their appointment, and endeavor to keep under a lively sense of the interesting

concerns, which may have exercised superior meetings, that they may be enabled to communicate them in a suitable manner to the meetings by which they were appointed.

Committees should enter seasonably on the business of their appointment, and agree on a report, to be made verbally by one of their number, or in writing, if the case require it ; and when they report the business unaccomplished, they should offer reasons therefor, that the meeting may be satisfied there has been no unprofitable delay.

When Friends appointed to services are prevented from attending to them, (and it is expected that nothing but sickness, or other extraordinary cause, will prevent them,) they should render an account thereof to the meeting appointing them ; and, if they are representatives, they are also to render an account to the meeting which they were appointed to attend. And it is advised that Friends do not, unnecessarily, withdraw from their meetings, until the business be finished.

Those who give way to sleeping in meetings, should not be employed in the service of the Society.

Lest the progress of truth in our religious Society, be obstructed by injudicious appointments to services in the Church, Friends are advised to be weighty in their nominations ; that spiritually minded persons, concerned to walk consistently with their profession, may be separated to the service of the Society ; for the right maintenance of our christian discipline, in its various branches, very much depends on a solemn attention, to the pointings of divine wisdom therein.

In order that our christian discipline, may be supported agreeably to the design of its institution, it is important that quarterly meetings should wait for the influence of the Spirit of Truth, that they may be qualified to administer such advice and assistance to monthly meetings, as circumstances shall require : and monthly meetings should also be impressed with the necessity of a close attention to the tenor and spirit of the discipline ; as much depends on their care and concern, for the support and maintenance of the wholesome regulations, recommended for general use and practice.

It is earnestly desired, that religiously concerned and active members in the Society, consider the need there is of faithfulness on their part, in discharging, with diligence and circumspection, the trust committed to them ; as the welfare of our religious Society, and the support of the various testimonies borne by it to the world, materially depend upon their devotedness to the Lord's work and service.

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WOMEN'S MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

As women's meetings for discipline have been of manifest advantage to their own sex in particular, as well as to our Society in general, it is earnestly desired, that they may wait for the influence of the Spirit of Truth in their meetings, which will qualify them for a faithful discharge of duty, in that part of the discipline of the Church which properly appertains to them.

Women's Preparative and Monthly Meetings.

Monthly meetings are to appoint a suitable number of overseers out of each preparative meeting, whose duties, as well as the order of proceeding in preparative meetings, are, in general, similar to those of the men's. They are also to appoint representatives to the quarterly meetings, and to prepare and transmit to quarterly meetings, summaries of the answers to the queries received from the preparative meetings; with such other business as may be necessary.

Women's monthly meetings are not to receive nor disown members, without the concurrence of men's monthly meetings. When a monthly meeting of women friends, has proceeded as far as appears necessary, in treating with a disorderly member, or in visiting a person requesting to be received into membership ; the case, with the sense of the meeting upon it, should be communicated in an explicit manner to the men's meeting, which should enter it on its minutes ; and if the men's meeting should unite with the women's, the latter should be informed thereof ; but should the men's meeting apprehend further care in the case to be necessary, a joint committee should be appointed, and the report of the committee presented to the men's meeting ; whose result, with the report, is to be laid before the women's meeting for its approbation.

Women's monthly meetings are to inform requesters and offenders of conclusions in their respective cases. They are to make quarterly collections for the relief of the poor of their sex ; and should their own funds be inadequate to afford competent relief, they are to apply to the men's meeting, or to its overseers of the poor, for assistance.

When a certificate of removal shall be necessary for a woman Friend, the women's monthly meeting is to appoint a committee to make the necessary inquiry, and prepare an essay ; which, if approved by the women's meeting, is to be laid before the men's meeting for concurrence ; but when a certificate of removal to include both sexes is to be pre-

pared, a joint committee should be appointed to make the inquiry, and prepare an essay ; and the certificates should be signed by the clerk of each meeting.

All certificates received for women Friends, are to be laid before the men's meeting, previous to acceptance.

Women's Quarterly Meetings,

ARE to receive the written accounts sent from their monthly meetings, and to transmit to the women's yearly meeting, summaries of the answers to the queries, with such other subjects as may appear to them necessary ; and they are to appoint a suitable number of representatives to attend the yearly meeting.

Women's quarterly meetings may communicate to their respective monthly meetings, such advices as they apprehend necessary, with any epistles or writings, received from their yearly meeting ; and they are to attend to such other concerns as may properly claim their notice and care.

The Yearly Meeting of Women Friends,

MAY correspond with any other yearly meeting of its own sex, and issue such counsel and admonition to its quarterly and monthly meetings as it may judge

necessary. The meeting is to have a fund of its own for such services as may properly come under its notice. The representatives attending the yearly meeting, are to exercise a religious care in the nomination of a clerk.

Women's meetings for discipline are to keep records of their proceedings.

MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

WHEN the preparative meetings of ministers and elders, constituted as hereafter directed, is united in proposing to the monthly meeting for discipline the consideration of acknowledging a Friend a minister, it is to inform the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders. If the quarterly meeting concur with the proposal, it is to return information to the preparative meeting, which is then to propose the consideration of the subject to the monthly meeting for discipline. Should the monthly meeting, after due and weighty deliberation, and the necessary attention of a committee, unite in approving the ministry of the Friend proposed, and in recommending him to the meeting of ministers and elders, having, previous to a result in the case, laid it before the women's meeting for its approbation, it is to inform the preparative meeting of ministers and elders. The Friend is then to be a member of the meeting of ministers and elders, and information is to be forwarded to the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.

When it shall appear to the preparative meeting of ministers and elders, that a Friend is so far advanced in religious experience, as to be qualified for the weighty trust of an Elder in the church, and the meet-

ing shall judge that it would be useful to appoint him to that station, the same mode of proceeding in making the appointment, is to be pursued, as is directed in recommending Ministers. When the person proposed to be recommended or appointed, is a female, the proposal, after being considered by the preparative and quarterly meetings of Ministers and Elders, should be forwarded to the women's monthly meeting, which shall lay the subject before the men's meeting, and the latter shall appoint a committee, to join with an appointment of the women's meeting in the case, and their joint report shall be presented first to the women's meeting, which is to inform the men's meeting of its judgment, and should the men's meeting concur in the recommendation or appointment, the Friend shall be a member of the meeting of Ministers and Elders ; and the information thereof is to be forwarded by the men's monthly meeting, to the preparative meeting of Ministers and Elders.

When Elders remove from one monthly meeting to another, they are not to be recommended as Elders to the monthly meeting to which they remove.

No Friend shall travel abroad as a Minister, or appoint meetings, unless previously recommended by the monthly meeting : but it is not hereby intended to debar a Friend, not recommended, from accompanying, in a short journey, a recommended Minister travelling in the ministry ; or, in a more extensive one, if he obtain the concurrence of the monthly meeting ; and, in a minute given him, nothing should be mentioned relative to his ministry.

When a Minister has a religious concern to travel in the ministry, within the limits of the quarterly meeting to which he belongs, the approbation of the monthly meeting should be obtained ; except in appointing a few meetings near home, when the approbation of the Ministers and Elders, collectively, will be sufficient. If his concern be to travel in other parts of the yearly meeting, a certificate or minute will be requisite ; unless, in making a visit in a neighboring quarterly meeting, the monthly meeting should judge a minute unnecessary.

Should a minister have a concern to make an extensive visit, amongst those not of our society, or a general visit in another yearly meeting, the concurrence of the quarterly meeting is to be obtained, and endorsed on the monthly meeting's certificate, signed by the clerk. If, from some peculiar circumstances, the monthly meeting should conclude, that too great inconvenience would result from his waiting for the quarterly meeting ; the certificate of the monthly meeting is to be signed by the clerk, or by the meeting more at large, as the case may require.

When a Minister has a concern to make a religious visit to Europe, or to other foreign parts, as the clearest evidence should be obtained in the undertaking, the concern, together with the certificates of the monthly and quarterly meetings, is to be laid before the yearly meeting of Ministers and Elders for its approbation ; and, if that be obtained, a certificate thereof, signed by the clerk, should be given.

As the performance of religious visits to families, is a service which, under right direction, has proved

useful and instructive for the encouragement of ministers, it is advised that those who have a concern to make a general visit of this kind, even in the monthly meeting to which they belong, should have the concurrence of the meeting; and if the concern extend to the families in another monthly meeting, a minute of concurrence ought to be obtained.

When a Minister has a concern to make an extensive visit in the ministry, it is advised that he lay the subject before the women's meeting for its concurrence; and their meeting is also to sign the minute or certificate furnished him.

When a female minister has a concern to travel in the ministry, she is to propose it for the consideration of the women's monthly meeting, and if their meeting unite with her, she is to lay it before the men's meeting for its concurrence; and when approved, a minute or certificate expressive thereof, is to be prepared, and signed by the clerk of each meeting, or by the meetings more generally, as the case may require.

Should a Minister, when remote from home on appointments of the yearly meeting, or meeting for sufferings, have a concern to appoint a few meetings, he is at liberty to proceed therein, after obtaining the approbation of the committee in company, together with such other Friends as can be conveniently consulted.

In order to guard against impositions, Friends are advised, when strangers come amongst them in the capacity of Ministers, to see that they are furnished with minutes or certificates.

Monthly meetings should take care that Friends, to whom certificates or minutes to travel have been granted, return them seasonably.

As the occasion of our religious meetings is solemn, a care should be maintained, to guard against every thing tending to disorder or interruption ; none are to oppose, in a religious meeting, a Friend when publicly speaking, whether he be a recommended Minister or not, whilst in unity as a member ; nor, in time of prayer, keep on the hat, nor show any remarkable dislike ; but, should any Friend have objections to what is delivered, he is to speak to the individual privately ; previous to which, it is advised, that the dissatisfaction be communicated to one or more of the Elders, for advice and assistance.

When meetings are disturbed by improper communications, it should be the care of the ministers and elders, to take suitable opportunities with the person who has given cause for concern, and to extend advice and counsel as may appear necessary ; and, if he continue to disturb our meetings for worship, he should be further admonished ; and, provided the desired effect be not produced, the case should be laid before the preparative meeting of Ministers and Elders, that further care may be extended ; but, should the Friend still persist therein, this meeting ought to lay it before the monthly meeting for discipline, which should proceed to treat with, and disown him, if it appear to be necessary.

As much depends on the conduct and example of Ministers and Elders, meetings have been established

amongst them, for the purpose of examining whether they are all preserved in an exemplary walking, answerable to their station ; where advice and caution may be administered, for the health and strength one of another, as may appear necessary : and with this view, the following queries are recommended to be read and answered in them.

Query 1. Are Ministers and Elders diligent in attending meetings for worship and discipline, and careful in bringing their families with them ?

II. Are they careful to labor honestly to maintain our christian discipline in every part, and not to screen their own families from the operation of it ?

III. Are Ministers sound in word and doctrine, and are they careful to minister in the ability that Truth gives ? Are unbecoming tones and gestures avoided ; and do they guard against enlarging their testimonies, so as to be burdensome ?

IV. Are the Elders careful to encourage in the right line, those who are young in the ministry ; and do they discourage forward persons, whose communications do not proceed from right authority ?

V. Are Ministers and Elders preserved in love and unity one with another, and with the meetings to which they belong ?

VI. Are they good examples in uprightness and moderation ; and careful to train up their families in plainness of dress, and simplicity of manners, becoming our religious profession ?

Ministers and Elders are exhorted to dwell in that

life, which gives ability to labor successfully in the Church of Christ.

The meetings of Ministers and Elders, are constituted and held in the following manner, namely :

The Ministers and Elders of each monthly meeting, are to meet once in three months, and compose a preparative meeting of Ministers and Elders ; unless the quarterly meeting for discipline, from some peculiar circumstances, should judge it most advisable that it be constituted of the Ministers and Elders of more than one monthly meeting ; and after some time spent in solid retirement, they are to read the aforesaid Queries, and prepare answers suitable to their state. Each preparative meeting is to appoint a suitable number of representatives, to attend the quarterly meeting of Ministers and Elders, and to lay before it the answers to the queries, and such other business as the preparative meeting may direct. The quarterly meeting is composed of all the preparative meetings of Ministers and Elders, within the limits of the quarterly meeting for discipline ; and the queries, with the answers from the preparative meetings, are to be read in that meeting, and the substance of them entered on its minutes. A summary of the answers received at the quarterly meeting preceding the yearly meeting, is to be sent by the representatives, to the yearly meeting of Ministers and Elders ; by which an opportunity will be furnished, for the extension of such advice and care as may appear necessary.

The meetings of Ministers and Elders, are not to interfere with any part of the exercise of the disci-

pline of the Church, appertaining to meetings for discipline.

Preparative meetings of Ministers and Elders, are desired to have a watchful care over the members of their meetings; and should any of them, by negligence, unfaithfulness, or otherwise, lose their usefulness, so as to render it advisable that they should be released from their stations, the said meetings if their brotherly care toward them do not produce the desired effect, are to put the cases in a way to come before the monthly meeting, in order that they may be released from being members of the meeting of Ministers and Elders, should the monthly meeting deem it necessary.

As the Author of all Good continues, from time time, to open amongst us the spring of living ministry, it is fervently desired, that Ministers and Elders may so dwell under the Divine influence, as to be enabled to discern, when offerings proceed from the right source, and when they do not; and thus experience a qualification to be nursing fathers and mothers, to those who are young in the ministry; with gentleness and wisdom advising and encouraging them to abide in simple and patient submission to the will of God, and to keep to the openings of Divine love in themselves, in order that they may witness a gradual growth in their gifts.

Ministers and Elders are tenderly advised to watch over the flock, in their respective places and stations; evincing by their pious example, in conduct and conversation, that they are faithfully devoted to support the testimonies of the blessed Truth.

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

In order that the yearly meeting, with its several branches, might be properly represented, when not in session, a meeting was established in the year 1759, under the name of the Meeting for Sufferings, to represent the Yearly Meeting and to act on its behalf, when the pressing interests of the Society should require attention. It consists, by subsequent regulations, of forty members, to meet at such times and places as the Yearly Meeting may direct; and those members who reside remotely from the place where its sittings are held, are to give information of all cases claiming its notice and care, and they are to attend as often as their distant situation will permit.

The services confided to the Meeting for Sufferings are—

1st. In general to represent the yearly meeting, and to act on its behalf as its representative, in all cases where the interest or reputation of our religious society may render it necessary.

2d. To have the oversight and inspection of all manuscripts proposed to be printed, relating to our religious principles or testimonies, and to promote or discourage the publication of them at their discretion; to reprint and distribute any writings already published, which they may judge would be useful; and when expenses are incurred in the execution of these duties, they are to draw on the Treasurer of the yearly meeting for the amount.

3d. To inspect and ascertain titles to land or other estates, belonging to any of our meetings ; and to attend to the appropriation of charitable legacies and donations, where circumstances may require.

4th. To receive from the quarterly meetings, such memorials concerning deceased friends as shall be forwarded ; that after the necessary inspection and correction, they may be laid before the yearly meeting, unless in cases, in which the meeting for sufferings, shall, on solid consideration, judge it inexpedient.

5th. To extend such advice and assistance to persons under suffering for our testimonies, as their cases may require ; and to apply to the government or persons in authority, on these and all other occasions, as it may judge necessary.

6th. To correspond, as occasion may require, with other meetings for sufferings.

The following directions are to be observed by the Meeting for Sufferings :—

1st. It shall keep minutes of its proceedings, and lay them annually before the yearly meeting.

2d. Twelve members shall constitute a meeting capable of transacting business.

3d. Four members may call a special meeting when they shall judge it necessary.

All approved Ministers, and the members of other Meetings for Sufferings, are at liberty to attend the sittings of said meeting.

OVERSEERS.

ALTHOUGH it is the duty of every faithful member of our society, to advise and admonish those who are guilty of unbecoming or disorderly conduct ; yet, that it may not be overlooked or neglected, it should be more particularly the business of overseers ; who, it is desired, may treat with them in the spirit of meekness and restoring love, patiently endeavoring to instruct and advise them ; but, should their labor prove ineffectual, the preparative meeting should, in due season, be informed of the cases, that, if necessary, they may be laid before the monthly meeting.

Two or more faithful and judicious Friends, should be appointed by the monthly meeting, to be overseers in each preparative meeting ; who ought to exercise a tender and vigilant care over their fellow members, that, if any thing contrary to the harmony and good order of our religious society appear, it may be seasonably attended to.

Although it is considered necessary, that overseers should be invested with some discretionary power, yet, as the reputation of the society may sometimes suffer, by their retaining cases too long, and as offenders may not be benefited by the indulgence ; overseers are advised to a due and careful consideration of the impor-

tant trust committed to them, and of the responsibility of their station, that cases may not be unseasonably kept from the meeting.

Monthly meetings are earnestly desired to give weighty attention to the pointings of Wisdom, in their choice for this important service in the church ; that those may be appointed, whose concern for the support of our christian testimony in its various branches, may tend to the preservation of good order.

As great care and deliberation are necessary in appointing overseers, it is advised, as a safe and prudent step, that monthly meetings appoint a committee to take the subject into consideration ; and, at the succeeding meeting, to propose such Friends as they may agree upon, to fill the station in each preparative meeting ; and the names should be separately proposed and considered.

NOTE.—In giving answers to those Queries which are answered but once a year, it should be done with reference to things as they exist at the time, and not to embrace such cases as have been previously settled.

QUERIES.

THE nine following Queries are to be distinctly read, and deliberately considered, in each preparative and monthly meeting, preceding each quarterly meeting; in order that Friends may be led to an individual examination, whether their practice is consistent with their profession; and that Ministers, Elders, Overseers, and other religiously concerned Friends, may be excited to discharge their duty faithfully, in administering counsel and admonition, tending to the promotion of vigilance and care, in the exercise of our Christian discipline.

In order to convey to each quarterly meeting, a general account of the state of our society, full and explicit answers to are be given by each preparative meeting, preceding the monthly meeting which precedes the quarterly meeting, to the first, second, third, fourth, and ninth queries, three times in the year; and these answers are to be digested in the monthly meeting, and sent to the quarterly meeting; where they are in like manner to be read and considered: and once in the year, namely, in the preparative and monthly meetings before the quarterly meeting, which precedes the yearly meeting, the first nine queries are, in like manner, to be read and considered; and each of

them is to be particularly and distinctly answered, and the answers to be forwarded as before directed ; in order to convey to the yearly meeting, a clear account of the state of society.

The tenth query is to be read and answered in the monthly and quarterly meetings, preceding the yearly meeting.

First Query. Are Friends careful to attend all our meetings for religious worship and discipline ; is the hour observed ; and are they clear of sleeping, and of all other unbecoming behavior in them ?

Second Query. Are love and unity maintained as becomes brethren ; if differences arise, is due care taken speedily to end them ; and do Friends avoid and discourage tale-bearing and detraction ?

Third Query. Are Friends careful to keep themselves, their own, and other Friends' children under their care, in plainness of speech, behavior and apparel ; and do they endeavor, by example and precept, to train them up in a religious life and conversation, consistent with our christian profession ? Are the Scriptures of Truth frequently read in their families, and do they extend a due care in these respects, towards others under their tuition ?

Fourth Query. Do Friends avoid the use of distilled spirituous liquors, excepting for purposes strictly medicinal ; and are they clear of frequenting taverns, and of attending places of diversion ?

Fifth Query. Are the circumstances of the poor, and of those who appear likely to require assistance,

duly inspected ; is relief seasonably afforded them, and are they advised and assisted in such employments as they are capable of ; and are their children, and all others under our care, instructed in school-learning to fit them for business ?

Sixth Query. Do any keep company with persons not of our society on account of marriage ; do parents connive at their children's keeping company with such ; and do any attend the marriages of those who go out from us, or marriages accomplished by a priest ?

Seventh Query. Are Friends clear of bearing arms, of complying with military requisitions, and of paying any fine or tax in lieu thereof ?

Eighth Query. Are there any deficient in performing their promises, or paying their just debts ; do any extend their business beyond their ability to manage as becomes our religious profession ; and are those who give occasion for fear on those accounts, timely labored with for their preservation and recovery ?

Ninth Query. Is care taken seasonably to deal with offenders in the spirit of meekness, and agreeably to our discipline ?

Tenth Query. Are the answers to the queries, forwarded by subordinate to superior meetings, the substance of, and founded on, the answers from the preparative meetings ?

The following advices are to be read and carefully attended to, in the preparative, monthly, and quarterly meetings, after the queries are answered.

Friends are earnestly desired to guard against the corrupt conversation of the world ; to avoid reading pernicious books, and to prevent the introduction of them into their families ; to observe due moderation at marriages, in the furniture of their houses, in their manner of living, and on all other occasions ; to inspect frequently the state of their temporal affairs ; and to be always provided with wills, agreeably to the tenor of the discipline on that subject.

Due care should be taken that all our members are clear of being concerned in lotteries ; that no children are placed out contrary to discipline ; that the necessary care is extended respecting certificates of removal ; and that none of our members are concerned in illegal trade, or in dealing in prize goods ; and Friends are pressingly advised not to violate our testimony against war in any respect. It is also affectionately desired, that when any Friends are brought into suffering on this account, they may manifest a disposition comporting with our christian profession.

The following recommendation is to be read once a year, in the preparative, monthly, and quarterly meetings, preceding the yearly meeting.

Friends should avoid all contention and personal reflections in our meetings for discipline, and be careful to keep out of heats and doubtful disputations ; that they may be conducted in the peaceable spirit and wisdom of Jesus, with decency, forbearance, and love to each other.

TREATING WITH OFFENDERS.

It is advised that offenders be treated with in a christian spirit, and in the persuasive language of love and tenderness ; that the evil of their conduct may be so laid before them, as to bring them to a sense of it in themselves, and to promote their restoration.

Although those who transgress should manifest a spirit of opposition, yet we ought patiently and meekly to instruct and advise them, that we may not only have the reward of peace in ourselves, but that it may so affect the spirits of those spoken to, as to make them sensible that we have performed a christian duty; and an office of brotherly love towards them. If any reject this tender labor, the overseers are to acquaint the Preparative Meeting thereof, in order, if necessary, that the case may be forwarded to the Monthly Meeting ; that further care may be taken according to our established rules ; and notice should be given to the party, when it can reasonably be done, previously to its being laid before the Preparative Meeting.

In all cases introduced from the Preparative to the Monthly Meeting, and claiming its labor, a Committee should be appointed to treat with the offender, in order to convince him of his error, and transgression of the Discipline of the Society. The Committee shall report to the Monthly Meeting the effect of its labor, and

if there is reason to believe that the extension of farther care would be beneficial, the case should be continued ; but when the Monthly Meeting, after deliberate and weighty consideration, is satisfied that further labor and care would be unavailing, and that it has become necessary that the case should be decided, and when the Meeting shall come to a judgment ; a Committee is to be appointed to prepare a minute of disownment, and produce it to the next Monthly Meeting for its approbation ; when a Committee should be appointed to inform the individual of his disownment, to shew him, and, if required, to furnish him with a copy of the minute of disownment, and to inform him of his right of appeal.

On this interesting occasion, it is particularly necessary that the Committee should take a solid opportunity with the individual, and therein endeavor, in christian love and meekness, to leave him in a tender disposition of mind.

For the maintenance of our testimony against war, as well as against cases of public scandal, Monthly Meetings are at liberty to disown members, who have been guilty of such misconduct, and who afterwards depart from amongst us, and thus deprive Friends of an opportunity of extending the labor which their cases require.

When a person commits an offence, and removes out of the limits of the Monthly Meeting of which he is a member, before the necessary care is taken ; or if he remove within the limits of another Monthly Meeting, and commit an offence there, before a certificate of removal has been accepted, the Monthly Meeting to which he belongs, shall forward the complaint against him to

the Monthly Meeting where he resides ; and it shall be the duty of the latter Meeting, to treat with him in all respects, as if he were its own member, and proceed to disown him, or restore him to unity, as, in its judgment, the circumstances of the case may require. And it shall be the duty of said Meeting to inform the Meeting to which he belongs of the result ; and, in case of his being restored to membership, he shall be a member of the Monthly Meeting, which treated with him, without a certificate of removal being sent.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND TESTI- MONIES OF DENIAL.

PERSONS under dealing, or who have been disowned, making acknowledgments of their offences, should prepare them in writing, unless in some cases of those under dealing, the monthly meeting should consider it unnecessary. If an acknowledgment be from a person under dealing, it should be shown to the committee appointed in his case, and by them handed to the monthly meeting ; or, if it be from a disowned person, it is to be shown to the overseers, and by them handed to the preparative meeting.

A preparative meeting, overseers, or committee of a monthly meeting, are not to judge of an acknowledgment so as to prevent its going to the monthly meeting ; they may, however, remark to a person offering an acknowledgment, any manifest obstruction, and then leave him at liberty to proceed as he may think best.

The monthly meeting is not to require, in an acknowledgment from a disowned person, a recital of the particulars for which he was disowned ; but, it may be sufficient if it suitably express, in general terms, a sense of the transgression, and a desire to be again received into membership ; for, in the meeting's atten-

tion to the case, it is especially necessary that the same care be taken to examine into his conduct, and to ascertain the state of his mind, with respect to his fitness for reception, as in the case of a requester.

When a disowned person, who has removed out of the limits of the monthly meeting which disowned him, shall apply to be reinstated, acknowledging his error, and the meeting is satisfied with the purport of the acknowledgment, information is to be forwarded to the monthly meeting where he resides, that an acknowledgment has been presented by him, with the tenor of which it is satisfied ; but the acknowledgment is not to be sent, and he is to be treated with, and his fitness for membership considered by the meeting where he resides : if received, he shall be a member of this meeting : the meeting by which he was disowned is to be informed of the result in the case, whether he be received or not.

All testimonies of denial should be entered on the minutes of the monthly meeting.

Testimonies of denial, or acknowledgments, are not to be publicly read, unless monthly meetings should apprehend that our religious profession would suffer reproach by the omission.

APPEALS.

If any person be dissatisfied with the judgment of a monthly meeting, he may, after a copy of the testimony of denial is offered to him, notify the first or second meeting, but no other, of his intention to appeal to the next ensuing quarterly meeting; which notification the monthly meeting should enter on its minutes, and appoint four or more Friends to attend the quarterly meeting with copies of the minutes relative to the case, and give such explanations as may be necessary.

The quarterly meeting is to refer the subject to a committee, (omitting the members of the monthly meeting appealed from,) who are carefully and deliberately to consider the case, and report their judgment respecting it; and the quarterly meeting shall confirm or reverse the judgment of the monthly meeting, as, on impartial deliberation, shall appear to be right, and inform the appellant of the result.

Should the appellant be dissatisfied with the judgment of the quarterly meeting, and notify the next quarterly meeting, or the one succeeding it, but not afterwards, of his intention to apply to the yearly meeting for a further hearing, the quarterly meeting should record the notification, and appoint four or

more Friends to attend the yearly meeting, with copies of the monthly and quarterly meetings' minutes in the case ; and the decision of the yearly meeting shall be final.

When the appellant is a female, the women's meeting is also to appoint a committee to accompany the minutes in the case, from the monthly to the quarterly meeting, and from the quarterly to the yearly meeting ; and the women's quarterly and yearly meetings should appoint committees to unite with the committees of the men's meetings in examination of the subject ; and the report of the joint committee is to be made to the men's meeting, which is to decide on the appeal, and inform the women's meeting of its decision ; and a committee of both the men's and the women's meeting should be appointed to inform the appellant of the result.

Appellants have a right to be present during the appointment of the committee in their cases ; and objections which they may then make to persons nominated on the committee, are to be attended to.

And Appeals made to the Yearly Meeting, should be presented on the first or second day of the sitting of that body ; of which the Appellant should be informed.

PUBLIC SCANDAL.

If any member of our society should be guilty of gross or notorious crimes, or such other disorderly and indecent practices as occasion public scandal, he should be speedily labored with by the monthly meeting, and if he cannot be brought to a proper sense of his misconduct, he should be disowned.

WAR.

CONSONANT with the precepts and doctrines of the gospel, which breathes peace on earth and good will towards men, we have found it to be our indispensable duty, to bear a faithful testimony against war. It is, therefore, affectionately enjoined on the members of our society, to demean themselves, on all occasions, in a christian and peaceable manner ; demonstrating to the world that they are uniform in profession and practice. Friends are earnestly advised not to unite with any, directly or indirectly, in a way calculated to promote the spirit of war, or which may encourage or strengthen them therein ; to avoid engaging in any business tending to promote war, underwriting on armed vessels, or being concerned in any company where such insurance is made, or in shipping, or ordering goods shipped, in armed vessels.

But should members of our Society be so unmindful of our christian testimony against war, as to bear arms, or actively comply with military requisitions ; should they be concerned in warlike preparations, offensive or defensive, by sea or land ; pay a fine, penalty, or tax, in lieu of personal service ; deal in prize goods, directly or indirectly, or be concerned in pro-

moting the publication of writings, which tend to excite the spirit of war ; advice should be speedily given them ; and, after being tenderly treated with, in order to bring them to a sense of their error in departing from this distinguishing testimony of the society, unless they give satisfaction to the monthly meeting, they are to be disowned.

OATHS.

OUR testimony against oaths, is founded upon the following express and positive command of Christ: "Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths : but I say unto you, swear not at all ; neither by Heaven, for it is God's throne ; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool ; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King ; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black : but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay ; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."—Matth. v. 33 to 37.

This testimony, we also find, was clearly held up, and emphatically enjoined, by the apostle James, upon his christian brethren : "But above all things my brethren, swear not ; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath ; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation."—James v. 12.

Believing that no argument can invalidate prohibitions, thus clear and positive, we are bound religiously to regard them.

But should any member of our society so far disregard our testimony herein, as, in any case, to take or administer an oath, he should be labored with, and, unless he give satisfaction, disowned.

SLAVERY.

As it has been, and continues to be, the concern of our society, to testify its disunity with the practice of enslaving mankind ; if any of our members should be concerned in buying or selling, or should give away or transfer any negro, or other slave, in such manner as to cause his service to be extended beyond the time limited by law or custom for white persons ; they, together with those who accept of such gift or assignment, or hold any descendants of slaves transferred in the manner before-mentioned, or hire any from those who hold them in bondage, or take them by indenture, or otherwise, unless their freedom be first secured, should be speedily labored with in a christian spirit ; and if they cannot be brought to such a sense of their injustice, as to do whatever the monthly meeting shall judge reasonable and necessary to restore those injured persons to their natural and just right of liberty, they should be disowned.

Friends are desired to avoid any act by which the right of slavery is acknowledged ; but it is not hereby intended to debar them from the exercise of benevolence toward those who are held in slavery.

Friends who have youth of African descent under their tuition, are exhorted to treat them in a christian

manner, it being their religious duty to give them useful and necessary learning, to fit them for business, and to instruct them in morality and the principles of religion.

The state of those who have been held as slaves by Friends, or by their predecessors, calls for serious inquiry and close examination, how far they are clear of withholding from them, or their children, that assistance which may be found to be their just right ; and the descendants of those Friends who have held them in bondage, are affectionately entreated to attend to the openings of duty on this subject. Even if no such obligations to this people existed amongst us, it is worthy of serious consideration whether there is any object of beneficence more deserving attention, than that of training up the youth of this injured part of the human family, in such virtuous principles and habits, as may render them useful and respectable members of the community.

DISTILLED SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS.

IN consideration of the corrupting and ruinous effects occasioned by the importation, distillation, and sale of ardent spirits, which produce intemperance, and lead to the impoverishment of many, the injury of the constitutions and minds of many more, and the increase of vice and dissoluteness in the land ; it is earnestly desired that none of our members may contribute to this great evil, by being concerned in importing, distilling, or vending ardent spirits, or selling their grain, or other produce, for the purpose of distillation : but, if any shall so far disregard the concern of the society, and the labor of their Friends, as to continue in either of these practices, and cannot be brought to such a sense of their misconduct as to desist from it, they are to be disowned.

Friends should carefully avoid vain and idle company, tippling, and sipping drams and strong drink ; for, though such as are in these evil practices, may not suddenly become drunkards to the greatest degree, yet they are often led on to the greatest transgressions ; and even some who have had the good example of virtuous parents, have, from small beginnings, arrived to a shameful excess, to the reproach and ruin of themselves, and the great injury of their families.

Friends are cautioned against a pernicious custom which has prevailed, of giving rum, or other strong liquors, to excite people to bid at vendues to advance the price ; which, besides the injustice of the artifice, leads to intemperance and disorder ; and those of our members who are in trade, are cautioned against handing, or suffering it to be handed, to persons who come into their shops.

Should any members of our society give way to this evil practice, by handing to others, or taking strong liquors themselves at vendues, or countenance or promote any noisy gathering, they should be treated with as disorderly persons : and Friends are earnestly advised to refrain from any other than a medicinal use of distilled spirits.

TAVERNS.

THE youth, as well as those of riper age, are cautioned against unnecessarily frequenting taverns, and other places of public resort ; that they may not be exposed to noisy company and unprofitable conversation, or betrayed into the use of strong liquors ; by which, many have been corrupted in principle and practice, to the ruin of themselves and their families.

If any give way to these evil practices, they should be timely and tenderly treated with, in order to convince them of their danger ; but, if no fruits of amendment appear, monthly meetings, after discharging their duty, should proceed to disown them.

GAMING AND DIVERSIONS.

FRIENDS are not to attend stage plays, horse races, places of music or dancing, or other places of diversion ; nor lay wagers, nor be concerned in lotteries, nor practice any other kind of gaming : but should any be concerned in, or give way to, either of these practices, and they cannot, after tender labor in the spirit of restoring love, be brought to a due sense of their misconduct, monthly meetings should manifest their disunion with them, by separating them, from the society.

Friends are advised to be careful respecting the use of tobacco, and particularly to avoid the public use of it in streets, high roads, and other places of promiscuous resort ; and it is recommended to our youth, in an especial manner, to refrain from this unnecessary practice, which is so liable to become habitual, and injurious to health.

DEFAMATION AND DETRACTION.

WHEN any are guilty of tattling, tale-bearing, reproaching, back-biting, or speaking evil of others, or busily meddling with their affairs, when not concerned, tending to excite strife and discord, or cause disesteem amongst brethren or neighbors ; they are to be suitably treated with, and if they do not make satisfaction therefor, they should be disowned.

Friends are exhorted to act with due circumspection, that, in their conversation and conduct amongst men, they may do nothing to the hurt or reproach of any ; and should a Friend hear of a scandalous and injurious report of another, he ought to discountenance it, by showing the reporter the evil and injustice thereof ; and then, without further spreading it, he should go to the person whom it concerns, or advise him of it, that he may have an opportunity to clear himself, if innocent, or make satisfaction, if guilty : and should this private labor prove ineffectual, the overseers ought to be informed, that he may be treated with consistently with our discipline.

HIRELING MINISTRY.

As it is by the immediate teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, that acceptable worship is performed, and gospel ministry brought forth; as this powerful influence is the essential qualification for the work; and as the gift is divine, the service is freely and faithfully to be performed, without any view to reward from man.

Should any Friends be so regardless of this testimony, as to contribute to the support of an hireling ministry, monthly meetings are to labor, in love and tenderness, to convince them of their error; and, if their endeavors prove ineffectual, and the offenders persist in their unfaithfulness, they are to be disowned.

MARRIAGES.

YOUNG or unmarried persons, in membership with us, before they make any procedure with a view to marriage, should seek for right direction in this important concern, and early acquaint their parents or guardians with their intentions, and wait for their consent; by which they may be preserved from the dangerous bias of forward and uncertain affections.

Proposals of marriage are to be presented in writing to the preparative meeting of which the woman is a member, signed by the parties, in substance as follows:—

To the Monthly Meeting of ———.

We, the subscribers, ~~A. B.~~, son of C. and D. B., and ~~F. G.~~, daughter of H. and I. G., purpose taking each other in marriage; which we hereby offer for the approbation of Friends:—

(Signed,)

A. B.

F. G.

And the said written proposal is to be forwarded by the preparative to the monthly meeting, ~~where the couple intending marriage, shall not be required to attend personally to make their proposal.~~ If no reasons

Erased by order M. M. 1842

appear to prevent it, their said intentions should be minuted, and inquiry made concerning consent of parents or guardians ; whose consent should be either personally expressed, or sent to the monthly meeting in writing ; and it is advised that it be presented to the monthly meeting in which the proposal of marriage is first introduced. Should the parties be members of one monthly meeting, two Friends are to be appointed to inquire into the man's clearness for proceeding in marriage ; and a similar care should be taken by the women's meeting, concerning the woman. If she be a widow, having children, two or more men Friends should also be appointed, to see that their rights are legally secured.

Should the parties be members of different monthly meetings, the man, either at the first or second monthly meeting, is to produce a certificate from the monthly meeting to which he belongs, expressive of his clearness from other like engagements.

~~At the second monthly meeting they are to appear personally, both in the men's and the women's meeting, and the man, on their behalf, is to request the answer of the meeting to their proposal of marriage :~~ *Eras*
~~and should the committees report, that there appears to be no obstruction to their proceeding, the meeting is to leave them at liberty to accomplish their marriage, according to the order of our society ; but it is not to be done on the day of the monthly meeting, nor on the first day of the week.~~ *by or 27th 1841*

Marriages should be accomplished with a gravity and weight becoming the occasion ; and the parties,

and others concerned, are to exercise due care that no cause of reproach take place by any intemperance, or disorderly conduct, but that all conduct with that order and sobriety which become our religious profession. And, for the assistance of those immediately concerned, two men and two women friends are to be appointed, by the monthly meeting, to attend at the marriage, and also at the house where the parties may go after the meeting ; and should they or other friends observe any inconsistent conduct, they ought, as soon as they conveniently can, to admonish those who are disorderly : and the Friends appointed to attend at the marriage, are to report to the next monthly meeting, whether it has been conducted according to good order, and whether the marriage certificate is handed to the Recorder.

Friends are advised to avoid making expensive entertainments, and inviting large companies.

Marriage implies union, as well in spiritual as in temporal concerns. While the parties differ in religious principles, they stand disunited in the main point, even in that which should increase and confirm their mutual happiness, and render them helpmates and blessings to each other. Where it is otherwise, the reciprocal obligation into which they have entered, becomes their burden. With whatever felicity they may have flattered themselves in the beginning, they find themselves disappointed, by the daily uneasiness accompanying their minds, and imbittering their enjoyments. The perplexed situation of the offspring of such connexions, is also to be lamented. Attached

by nature to both parents, their confusion often renders them unfixed in principle, and unsettled in practice.

It is therefore earnestly recommended, that parents, and those who have the important charge of educating youth, instruct them early in the principles of truth, and impress their minds with the necessity of religiously observing them. And when it is apprehended that any are likely to enter into marriage engagements with persons not members of our society, it becomes the duty, not only of parents, but also of overseers and other concerned Friends, as soon as may be, in a gentle, tender manner, to labor with them, and endeavor to show them the inconsistency and danger of such connexions.

From a sense of the peculiar importance of the marriage covenant, as it regards the safety of individuals, as well as the preservation of society from the injurious effects resulting from those connexions, it is concluded, that when any Friend shall marry a person not a member of our Society, he shall be disowned; unless, upon being visited by a Committee, he expresses a desire to be retained in membership, is in the practice of attending Meetings, and gives evidence of attachment to our religious principles.

In order to prevent marriages between persons of too near a kin, no marriage between first cousins, ~~nor~~ *Eraser*
~~between a man and his deceased wife's half-sister,~~ *by order*
shall be permitted amongst us; and when any persons *of Y. M.*

of degrees of kindred as near as these shall intermarry, they shall be disowned.

Should persons, who are both members of our society, accomplish their marriage with each other in any manner contrary to our established order, they should be treated with, and, unless they give satisfaction, they are to be disowned.

If any Friends shall attend the marriages of those who go out from us, or marriages accomplished by the assistance of a priest, they should be treated with as disorderly persons.

Should any parents or guardians connive at, and promote their children and those under their care, who are members of our society, keeping company, on account of marriage, with persons not in membership with us ; they are to be treated with, and, if they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, and to make satisfaction, monthly meetings are authorized to disown them.

When those who have been disowned for marrying contrary to Discipline, become desirous of being reunited to Society, they may be restored in the manner prescribed for persons requesting to be received into membership.

It is advised, that Friends who make proposals of marriage one to the other, do not dwell in the same house and family, from that time until their marriage be accomplished.

Monthly meetings are not to permit proposals of marriage to be made in them, sooner than a year after the decease of the husband or wife of the party.

No charge of misconduct ought to be brought forward against any person at the time of proposing his marriage, or during its progress in the meeting.

Form of Marriage Certificate.

A. B. of ———, town of ———, county of ———, and state of ———, son of C. B. and E. his wife, and F. G. daughter of H. G. and I. his wife, of ———, town of ———, county of ———, and state of ———, having laid their intentions of marriage with each other before two monthly meetings of the religious society of Friends, held at ———, in the state of ———, they having consent of *———, and nothing appearing to obstruct, their proposal of marriage was allowed by the meeting. These are to certify, that for the accomplishment of their intentions, this day of the month, in the year of our Lord they, the said A. B. and F. G. appeared in a public meeting of said society, held at and the said A. B. taking the said F. G. by the hand, did, on this solemn occasion, declare, that he took her to be his wife; promising, through Divine assistance, to be unto her a faithful and loving husband, until separated by death, or words to that effect; and then, the said F. G. did, in like manner, declare, that she took

* If there be parents and guardians, insert both; if only parents, or only guardians, let it be so expressed.

the said A. B. to be her husband ; promising, through Divine assistance, to be unto him a faithful and loving wife, until separated by death, or words to that import. And they, the said A. B. and F. G., (she, according to the custom of marriage, assuming the name of her husband,) as a farther confirmation thereof, did, then and there, to these presents, set their hands.

A. B.

F. G.

And we being present, have
subscribed our names as
witnesses thereof.

PLAINNESS IN DRESS, ADDRESS, &c.

UPON the first of these subjects, our object is to let decency, simplicity, and utility, be our motives ; and not a conformity to the vain and changeable fashions of the world. This is a principle, the propriety of which, we apprehend, no serious Christian will deny ; and whilst, in ages of pride and extravagance in dress, the adoption of it may make us appear singular, yet, in relation to us, this singularity is not without its use. It is, in some respects, like a hedge about us, which, though it may not make the ground it encloses rich and fruitful, yet it frequently prevents those intrusions, by which the labor of the husbandman is injured or destroyed.

The conduct which our society has adopted in this respect, is supported by many passages in sacred writ ; “Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,” was the advice of the Apostle to the Christians who dwelt at the seat of Roman grandeur and luxury.

And, again, in relation to the female sex : “I will,” says he, “that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness, and sobriety ; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array ; but, which becometh women professing god-

“liness, with good works :”—plainly showing, that, such adornings are contrary to the profession of godliness.

The Apostle Peter, also, is very full in his exhortations upon this subject ; “ Whose adorning,” saith he, “ let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel ; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.”

It is, however, highly important, that we should maintain more than the form of godliness ; and, whilst we avoid a conformity to this world, seek after that Divine power which will enable us to fulfil the other part of the exhortation :

“ Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

Thus, having our minds and conduct rightly regulated, we shall fulfil another important apostolic injunction : “ Let not your good be evil spoken of.”

In our address, also, we are bound to differ from the world, in several respects ; such as using the singular number in speaking to a single person ; our disuse of the appellation of master, mistress, &c., in a complimentary manner, to such as do not stand in these relations to us ; and our calling the months and days of the week by their numerical names, instead of those which are derived from the Heathen deities, &c.

From these, and other erroneous and corrupt practices, the spirit of truth led our predecessors in religious profession, and, we believe, will continue to lead us, as we faithfully follow it.

The origin of applying the plural number to an individual, and of giving complimentary titles to one another, is to be traced to vanity and pride.

Besides this consideration, our practice of using the singular number to a single person, is both more correct and perspicuous. Nevertheless, it is not by reason and propriety alone, that our conduct in these things may be supported.

Religion, if an attention to the precepts and practice recorded in the scriptures of truth, has a claim to that name, also justifies our conduct. It was, no doubt, in allusion to the complimentary, and not to the proper use of the appellations of Rabbi, Father, and Master, that our Lord prohibited the practice amongst his followers.

Speaking of the disposition of the Scribes and Pharisees, he says, "They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets ; and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi ; but be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." This is also the case with respect to our refusing to call the days and months by heathen names ; a practice, which is contrary to the injunction given to the Israelites : " In all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect ; and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth."

We, therefore, tenderly exhort all to consider seriously the plainness and simplicity which the gospel enjoins ; and to manifest it in their dress, speech, furniture of their houses, manner of living, and general deportment. A declension herein being attended with hurtful consequences in many respects, beside opening the way for some of our youth, more easily and unobservedly, to attend places of public resort, for the exercise of sports, plays, and other pernicious diversions, from which, truth taught our ancients, and still teaches us, to refrain.

And, in order that Friends who are active members of the society, may be useful in their several stations, in checking the increase of deviations from plainness, as well as in removing those which already sorrowfully exist ; it is affectionately desired, that they may evince their dedication to the Lord's cause, by the uprightness and consistency of their own example, showing forth a general moderation, and true simplicity in all things, becoming the followers of Jesus Christ. Thus they will be qualified availingly to labor in the vineyard ; to nip the early buddings of wrong things ; and to prune away those that have become stronger, and which being suffered to remain, may entirely spoil the vine.

But, should any so far depart from that simplicity which truth leads into, as to imitate and adopt the vain and extravagant fashions of the world, in speech, behavior, apparel, the furniture of their houses, or in other respects ; it is earnestly desired, that Friends, from time to time, when such things appear, take due and prudent care therein ; and, should any so

far reject the tender admonitions of their Friends, and the concern of the society, as to continue in their deviations, their cases ought to be brought to the monthly meeting for further care and attention ; and if, after the necessary labor of the meeting, extended in the spirit of restoring love, in order to convince them of the impropriety of their conduct, and its opposition to the principles and approved practice of the society, they cannot be reclaimed, they are to be disowned.

DAYS AND TIMES.

FRIENDS should keep to the simplicity of Truth, and our ancient testimony against the superstitious observance of days and times, and calling the days and months by heathen names.

In order that the importance of this christian testimony may be the more clearly discerned, the following account is recommended to the serious consideration of Friends.

A brief account of the origin of the names, commonly used, of some of the months in the year, and of all the days of the week :

1. January was so called from Janus, an ancient king of Italy, whom heathenish superstition had deified ; to whom a temple was built, and this month dedicated.

2. February was so called from Februa, a word denoting purgation by sacrifices ; it being usual in this month, for the priests of the heathen god Pan, to offer sacrifices, and perform certain rites, conducing, as was supposed, to the cleansing or purgation of the people.

3. March was so denominated from Mars, feigned to be the god of war, whom Romulus, founder of the Roman empire, pretended was his father.

4. April is generally supposed to have derived its name from the Greek appellation of Venus, an imaginary goddess, worshipped by the Romans.

5. May is said to have been so called from Maia, the mother of Mercury, another of their pretended heathen deities, to whom, in this month, they paid their devotions.

6. June is said to have taken its name from Juno, one of the supposed goddesses of the heathen.

7. July, so called from Julius Cæsar, one of the Roman emperors, who gave his name to this month, which before was called Quintilis, or the fifth.

8. August, so named in honor of Augustus Cæsar, another of the Roman emperors. This month before was called Sextilis, or the sixth.

The other four months, namely, September, October, November, and December, still retain their numerical Latin names ; which, according to the last regulation of the calendar, are improperly applied. However, from the continued use of them hitherto, as well as from the practice of the Jews before the Babylonish captivity, it seems highly probable that the method of distinguishing the months by their numerical order only, was the most ancient, as it is the most plain, simple, and rational.

As the idolatrous Romans thus gave names to several of the months, in honour of their pretended deities, so the like idolatry, prevailing among the Saxons, induced them to call the days of the week by the name of the idol, which, on that day, they peculiarly worshipped. Hence,

The first day of the week they called Sunday, from their customary adoration of the sun on that day.

The second day of the week they called Monday, from their usual custom of worshipping the moon on that day.

The third day of the week they named Tuesday, in honor of one of their idols called Tuisco.

The fourth day of the week was called Wednesday, from the appellation of Woden, another of their idols.

The fifth day of the week was called Thursday, from the name of an idol called Thor, to whom they paid their devotions on that day.

The sixth day of the week was termed Friday, from the name of Freya, an imaginary goddess, by them worshipped.

The seventh day was called Saturday, from Seater, by them worshipped ; or from Saturn, an imaginary deity of the Romans.

Seeing, therefore, that these appellations and names of days, months, and times, are of an idolatrous or superstitious origin, contrary to the Divine command, the practice of good and holy men in former ages, and repugnant to the christian testimony borne by our faithful friends and predecessors in the Truth, for the sake of which they patiently endured many revilings; let neither the reproach of singularity, nor the specious reasonings of such as would evade the cross of Christ, turn any aside from the simplicity of the gospel, nor discourage them from keeping to the language of truth, in denominating the months and days according to the plain and numerical way of expression ; thereby follow-

ing the example of our worthy elders, and coming up in a noble and honorable testimony against those, and all other remains of idolatry and superstition.

Believing that no religious act can be acceptable to God, unless produced by the influence of his Holy Spirit, our members cannot consistently join with any in observance of public fasts, feasts, or what are termed holy-days ; or such injunctions and forms as are devised by the will of man in these respects ; nor conform to the custom of illuminating houses, nor do any act as a mark of joy for victory obtained in war, or for any other occasion of public rejoicing.

TRADE.

THE manifestations of the Spirit of Truth, when duly regarded, lead out of bondage to the spirit of this world ; but the inordinate love and pursuit of worldly riches, often lead those who are captivated thereby, into many difficulties and dangers, and obstruct the work of religion in the heart. And, in order that the service of our religious society may not be lessened, nor its reputation dishonored, by the imprudence of its members in their worldly engagements, let them be careful not to engage in such business as they do not understand, and avoid extending their concerns beyond their abilities to manage, and at the risk of others ; and endeavor, on all occasions, strictly to perform their promises, and fulfil their contracts.

It is particularly advised that none “make haste to be rich,” by engaging in hazardous enterprizes ; but that all content themselves with a plain and moderate way of living, consistent with our religious profession. When any amongst us err, or are in danger of erring, in these respects, let them be seasonably and faithfully admonished.

It is recommended that Friends annually inspect the state of their affairs ; and keep their accounts so clear and accurate, that they may, at any time, easily ascer-

tain whether they live within the bounds of their circumstances.

When any find that there is danger of their not having sufficient property to discharge their just debts, they should immediately consult with some judicious Friends, and, if they advise it, without loss of time, make their circumstances known to their creditors ; being careful to make a just and equal distribution, avoiding the too common and injurious practice of paying those who stand as securities, in preference to other creditors.

When any persons, by living above their means, or from a want of punctuality in fulfilling their contracts, give overseers sufficient cause to believe that they are declining in their circumstances, and likely to fail, it is advised that they be seasonably treated with ; and if it appear requisite, counselled to call their creditors together without delay. If, notwithstanding this advice, they still persist, and run into embarrassment to the injury of others, and to their own disreputation, the monthly meeting to which they belong, is to be timely informed thereof, and the meeting should proceed to treat with them. If this labor also prove ineffectual, testimonies of denial may be issued against them.

Cases of public failure in business should be brought to the monthly meeting, unless in cases which are attended with such circumstances as shall induce the overseers and other concerned Friends, whom they may consult, to be united in prospect that it is unnecessary.

And when monthly meetings, in examining the cases of those who have fallen short of the payment of their just debts, discover conduct which brings a reproach on our religious society, such offenders, after the extension of suitable labor, should be disowned, unless they condemn their misconduct in a satisfactory manner.

When failures occur, and the cases are under the care of monthly meetings, committees appointed to visit the parties, are to make due inquiry in what manner their accounts have been kept, and how their deficiencies have happened, and report accordingly.

Friends are advised to be cautious in receiving collections or bequests, for the use of the poor, or other purposes of society, from persons who have fallen short of the payment of their just debts, although they may be legally discharged by the voluntary act of their creditors ; for, until such persons have discharged their debts, their possessions cannot, in equity, be called their own. When failures of this kind occur, and the debtors decline making further payments towards the remaining balances of their just debts, when of ability to do it, the overseers, after extending the necessary labour, should inform the monthly meeting thereof, which ought to inquire the cause ; and if, after a tender and brotherly examination, it should appear that their circumstances are such, as to render it clearly advisable, that a farther payment be offered to the creditors, or that a state of the debtors' affairs should be laid before the creditors, and the question submitted to them, whether a payment should be made

at that time, or deferred to a future day, let advice be given to them accordingly ; and, on their refusal, after the continued extension of tender labor, the monthly meeting is at liberty to disown them.

When Friends accept the office of trustee or assignee, they should be active in collecting the effects of the estate, and punctual in making speedy distribution.

When any in profession with us, are about entering into partnerships in trade, they should keep in view the propriety and safety of connecting themselves with members of our society ; but should any Friend become a partner with a person not in membership with us, and a failure in the performance of engagements, or neglect of the seasonable payment of just debts on the part of the said partnership, should give reasonable occasion for a procedure at law ; in such case, a creditor, who may be a member of our society, shall be at liberty to proceed accordingly : it appearing very improper, that the usual course of justice should be obstructed by any of our members, connecting themselves with those who are not in profession with us.

And let all consider well the ground on which they become endorsers, or joint securities ; lest, for want of due consideration, any involve themselves and families in ruinous circumstances, and risk their own peace of mind.

It is affectionately desired, that Friends may be cautious in all their engagements, and not suffer their minds to be captivated by an inordinate desire of rich-

es ; remembering the observations made by the apostle in his day, and often verified in ours, that “ They “ who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare :” and erring from the faith, “ pierce themselves through with many sorrows.”

Even when riches, to any extraordinary degree, have been amassed by the successful industry of parents, how often have they proved like wings to their children ; carrying them beyond the limitations of truth into liberties inconsistent with our religious testimonies, and sometimes into enterprises, which have terminated in irreparable damage to their temporal affairs, and a sorrowful neglect of the great work of the soul’s salvation.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

As, next to our own souls, our children are the immediate objects of our care and concern, parents and heads of families are entreated to lay to heart the great and lasting importance of a religious education to the youth; and to be solicitous that their tender and susceptible minds may be impressed with virtuous principles, and a just sense of the Divine Being, his wisdom, goodness, power, and omnipresence.

The importance of an early instruction in the law of God, is set forth with peculiar strength, clearness, and solemnity, in Deut. vi. 4th, &c. "Hear, O Israel, "the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love "the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with "all thy soul, and with all thy might: and these "words which I command thee this day, shall be in "thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently "unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou "sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the "way, and when thou liest down, and when thou "risest up."

Although virtue does not descend by lineal succession, nor piety by inheritance, yet the Almighty graciously regards the sincere endeavors of those

parents, whose early and pious care is over their offspring for good. Be ye, therefore, examples to them in your meetings, your families, and employments. Keep them out of the vain fashions, the corrupt customs, and unprofitable conversation of the world; laboring to convince their young and tender minds of the propriety of restraint, when necessary; exhorting them in meekness, and commanding in wisdom. And, as they advance in age, guard them against reading plays, romances, and all other publications of a nature prejudicial to the promotion of christianity; likewise against public pastimes and diversions: all which have a tendency to draw the incautious mind from a sense of religious duty; to bring it into a state of alienation from the divine life; and to deprive it of that inexpressible comfort and delight attendant upon the daily exercise of religion and virtue. And be ye concerned to discharge your important and awful duty with scrupulous attention. It is often too late to warn the youthful mind of danger, when your own negligence, or indulgence, hath suffered your offspring to deviate from the path of simplicity. If you fail to suppress the early beginnings of undue liberty, how can you expect a blessing on your endeavors, when farther deviations at length arouse your attention? Early, therefore, add restraint to instruction, lest your children become so accustomed to improper indulgences, as to slight and disregard your authority, when its exertion has at length appeared to you absolutely necessary for their safety and preservation.

If any parents willingly indulge their children, under their care, in such extravagancies and excesses as are herein pointed out, and persist therein, disregarding the continued, tender labor of their friends to bring them to a sense of their religious duty, monthly meetings are at liberty to disown them.

In much love to the rising generation, they are exhorted to avoid the many vanities and ensnaring corruptions to which they are exposed. Bear in mind, dear youth, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Take the advice of religiously concerned parents, guardians, and friends ; ever remembering, that children ought to obey their parents in the Lord, and that disobedience herein is a breach of the moral law, and offensive in the Divine sight.

POOR.

IN conformity to repeated scripture injunction, and agreeably to the ancient practice of Friends, the poor, amongst us, claim, and ought to receive, our particular and tender care and attention. In order that competent assistance may be afforded to this class, not only by relieving their immediate necessities, but by aiding them in such business as they may be best qualified for, each monthly meeting should have regular quarterly collections made, and the money placed in the hands of the treasurer of said meeting, for the exclusive purpose of assisting those of this description. And, as it is reasonable to expect, from the vicissitudes attending human life, that we shall always have more or less poor in our society, amongst whom may be some who have a peculiar claim to our sympathy, having to struggle with accumulated difficulties to support themselves and their families, it is affectionately desired, that Friends may show a liberality, proportionate to their means, in contributing to this benevolent purpose.

And, in order that this concern may be carried more fully into effect, a suitable number of judicious men and women Friends, should be separated in each monthly meeting, to inspect into the necessities of the

poor, and those who may appear likely to require assistance ; and not only relieve their immediate necessities, but assist them in such employments as they may be capable of ; in doing which, they are to proceed with great tenderness to the feelings of those who are the objects of their appointment ; carefully avoiding any unnecessary disclosure of their names, or the assistance rendered them.

And that Friends, appointed to the oversight of the poor, may be enabled to proceed in the manner above described, they should have the appropriation of the fund herein alluded to, and the drafts on the monthly meeting's treasurer, signed by as many of the overseers of the poor as the monthly meeting may think proper, should not designate the individuals to whom assistance is to be, or has been rendered ; but their proceedings are to be subject, at any time, to the inspection of a committee of the monthly meeting.

Overseers of the poor are to consider it their duty, to give particular attention that the children of Friends in low circumstances, be furnished with an opportunity of getting a competent portion of school-learning, to fit them for business.

And Friends are advised, in disposing of their estates by will, to consider the propriety of applying a portion thereof, to the use of the poor ; (which the establishment of this fund will afford an opportunity of doing ;) and of placing their bequests under the immediate care of the society : and, to aid them therein, the following form of a bequest is inserted :

I give and bequeath (or if it be land, I give and

devise) unto A. B. treasurer of the fund established by the monthly meeting of _____, of the religious society of Friends, for the relief of poor Friends, and the assistance of those who are in straitened circumstances, within the limits of the said monthly meeting, and to his successor and successors in that trust ; and, if the said monthly meeting should be discontinued, the said bequest, (or devise) is to go to the quarterly meeting to which the said monthly meeting belonged, for the same purpose.

REQUESTS TO BE RECEIVED INTO MEMBERSHIP.

REQUESTS from those who desire to be received into membership, are to be introduced by the overseers, and read in the preparative meeting ; and, if no impropriety appear in their being forwarded to the monthly meeting, they should be sent with the minutes of the preparative meeting.

The preparative meeting, or the overseers, are not to judge of a request so as to prevent its going to the monthly meeting ; though either may observe to the requester any manifest obstruction ; but, should he continue desirous to have it laid before the monthly meeting, it is to be forwarded accordingly.

The monthly meeting should appoint some suitable Friends, to inquire into the life and conversation of the requester, and to take the necessary opportunities with him, in order to ascertain whether the motives for the request be sincere, and on the ground of conviction, and to report their sense thereon ; and when the meeting concludes to receive the person into membership, a minute to that import is to be made, and two or more Friends are to be appointed to inform him of it.

Monthly meetings are to receive into membership young children, whose parents are members, on the application of their parents, unless it should appear to the meeting, that they are not likely to be educated consistently with our profession.

When the request is for children, one of whose parents is a member and the other not, monthly meetings are to receive such children at the request of the parent who is a member, when there is a probability of their being educated agreeably to our religious profession.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

As much inconvenience would be likely to result from a want of due attention to keeping a record of births and deaths, monthly meetings are annually to appoint a committee, of which one or more should be from each preparative meeting, to collect an account of all the births and deaths of members, which have occurred within their respective limits, during the preceding year; to be by them handed to a Friend appointed by the monthly meeting, to record them in a book provided for that purpose.

The form of the record is as follows, viz.

B I R T H S .

Names of children.	When born.	Names of the parents.	Their residence.

D E A T H S .

Names of the deceased.	When deceased.	Age.	Parents' names.	Late residence.

Friends are to avoid the practice of handing wine, or spirituous liquors, at our funerals, or partaking of

them at the funerals of others : and they are advised to demean themselves with that gravity which becomes those solemn occasions.

That burials may be accomplished in an orderly manner, monthly meetings are directed to appoint a committee to attend those of our society, and the funerals of those not in membership with us, who are to be interred in our grounds. Permission for the interment of the latter, is to be obtained from this committee ; which is to see that they are conducted in a manner becoming the occasion, and agreeably to the directions before expressed. This committee are also to take care that our burial grounds be properly enclosed, and kept in decent order.

Friends are to avoid the vain custom of wearing or giving mourning habits, and all extravagant expenses about the interment of the dead ; and they are not to erect grave or tomb stones exceeding one foot in height above the surface of the ground, sixteen inches in width, and six inches in thickness ; said stones to be entirely plain, without any ornament, and to have nothing inscribed or cut upon them excepting name and date.

REMOVALS AND CERTIFICATES.

WHEN Friends have a prospect of removing, they should be careful not to suffer wrong motives to influence their conclusions ; and before such steps are taken as may close the way to receiving advice, they are advised to take the counsel of some of their experienced friends, on the propriety of the proposed removal ; and elders, overseers, and other concerned Friends, when they hear of any inclining to remove, are to consider it their duty, in brotherly love, to counsel them to observe the foregoing advice.

When any remove, they should have a certificate from the monthly meeting of which they are members, recommending them to the monthly meeting where they are going to reside, expressive only of their right of membership, settlement of temporal concerns, and freedom from marriage engagements, as the case may require ; to be founded on inquiry made by a committee appointed for that purpose, and the committee are not to confine their inquiries to the monthly meeting where the person resides, if there be reason to believe that his affairs are not settled in other places. If the certificate be for a recommended Minister, it should be expressive thereof.

When a certificate of removal is produced to the meeting to which it is directed, it shall be the duty of that meeting to accept it, unless there be some manifest obstruction; and when accepted, the Friend recommended by it shall be a member of that meeting.

Removal certificates should be forwarded for apprentices, and others under age, who are placed within the limits of another monthly meeting.

Monthly meetings are advised to extend due care that certificates of removal be seasonably forwarded to the meetings to which they are directed.

Certificates of removal are to be preserved, by record or otherwise, by the monthly meeting accepting them; and each meeting should keep records of all certificates which it issues.

DIFFERENCES AND ARBITRATIONS.

SHOULD differences arise between any members of our society, about their temporal concerns, according to ancient and comely order, brother ought not to go to law with brother, except from apparent and urgent necessity, as is hereafter expressed and limited ; namely, the party thinking he has reason of complaint, is to speak in a calm and friendly manner, or, if he live at a distance too great to do it in person, he should write to the party by whom he thinks himself injured, or in danger of suffering in his just right ; endeavoring by gentle means, in a brotherly manner, to obtain it ; but, if this orderly proceeding prove ineffectual, either himself, or, if he live at a distance, some friend to whom he may write and empower on his behalf, should take one or more of the overseers, or other judicious Friends, and in like manner make the claim ; and the Friends accompanying the complainant, are to use their endeavors to have the matter justly and expeditiously settled between the parties. Should the case appear to be a plain one, or a debt against which no reasonable objection is made by the debtor, they are to advise the party complained of to make satisfaction, without car-

rying it either to arbitrators or to the meeting. But, should there appear to be either unsettled differences in accounts, or cause for dispute, and they cannot effect a settlement between the parties themselves, they are to advise them to submit it to arbitration. If either party refuse to do this, such refusal ought to be represented to the preparative meeting by the overseers, or by the other party, if neglected by them ; previous notice of which is to be given to the person complained of. And, provided the parties cannot, by the meeting's care, be brought to an agreement, or to refer the subject to arbitration, the complaint should be carried from the preparative to the monthly meeting, previously notifying the party complained of. The first proceeding of the monthly meeting should be, to inquire whether the beforementioned gospel order has been duly observed ; and if it has not, the complaint is to be referred back to the preparative meeting, and no notice of the subject taken on minute. But, should it appear that the necessary care has been previously taken, the monthly meeting is to appoint a committee to have a conference with the parties, and to ascertain whether the case be attended with such circumstances as will justify the monthly meeting in advising it to be left to arbitration. Should this appear to be the case by the report of the committee, the parties are to be again advised to submit the subject to arbitration ; and, if either of them refuse to comply, the monthly meeting, after the necessary labor with the person refusing, should proceed to disown him.

When a case of difference has been submitted to arbitration, the award ought to be final, unless it should appear notoriously evident, that the arbitrators have materially erred in their judgment, or proceedings, or have not given sufficient opportunity of producing the necessary evidence in the case. Where this appears evident to the monthly meeting, the quarterly meeting should be informed, that the monthly meeting has a case before it, in which it desires assistance ; and the quarterly meeting is to appoint a committee to sit with, and assist the monthly meeting therein ; and should it appear, on mature consideration, that there is cause for dissatisfaction, a rehearsing is to be granted by the same, or other arbitrators, and their award shall be final.

When arbitrators are chosen in any case, they ought, as speedily as may be, to appoint time and place, and attend duly to the subject, giving the parties and their witnesses a full and fair hearing in the presence of each other : they should avoid unnecessary delay, and make the award within the time appointed.

As there may be circumstances which would render it unreasonable to require a compliance with the before-mentioned procedure, such as, firstly, the party absconding, or leaving the country with the design of defrauding his creditors ; or, secondly, when the time it would take to go through the meeting, might be a manifest damage to the creditor or claimant, as in cases of apparent danger of bankruptcy, and the party being largely in debt, and other creditors generally com-

mencing suits, or otherwise securing their demands ; or when, by the statute of limitation, a claim may be barred in law ; or, thirdly, when there may be danger of future damage to those who may submit thereto, as in the case of executors, administrators, trustees, or Friends who stand as security for those who are not in membership with us ; it may therefore be necessary, and it is advised, that monthly meetings hold excused such as shall appear to them to be thus necessitated to proceed at law ; and the parties are cautioned to conduct themselves towards each other with decency and moderation, without anger or animosity, which will be a becoming testimony even in courts, and show that nothing but the nature of the case, and our common station with our neighbors, under the laws of the land, bring any of us there.

If any person in membership with us, shall arrest, or sue at law, another member, without proceeding in the manner herein before prescribed, he should be treated with for it ; and, unless he make satisfaction, he is to be disowned.

It is advised that persons, differing about temporal concerns, do, as seldom as may be, choose ministers for arbitrators.

And, as it is our duty to seek peace with all men, and to avoid giving provocation, or just offence to any, it is advised that Friends do not go to law with others not of our profession, without due consideration, and having sufficient cause for it ; manifesting, in contested cases, a decided preference for a settlement by arbitration.

Friends ought to give no just cause for others to go to law with them ; but they should carefully comply with their promises and contracts ; and when they have reasons for objecting to a demand, they should show a readiness to settle it between themselves, or submit it to reference.

SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

It is affectionately recommended to Friends, especially parents and heads of families, to endeavor, both by precept and example, to impress on the minds of the younger class, a due regard and esteem for those excellent writings, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and to advise them frequently to read and meditate therein, and, at proper seasons, to instruct them, that the same blessed experience of the work of sanctification, through the operation of the Spirit of Truth, to which they clearly bear testimony, is to be witnessed now, as in former ages, by all who attend to its manifestations. Thus, by the Divine blessing on this pious care, their youthful minds may be led into a firm belief of the christian religion as held forth in the Scriptures, and particularly in those parts which relate to the miraculous birth, holy life, blessed example, doctrine and precepts, of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

BOOKS.

AGREEABLY to the directions given to the meeting for sufferings, to take the oversight of all writings proposed to be printed, which relate to our religious principles and doctrines, Friends who may have such publications in view, are to lay them before that meeting for its advice and concurrence.

Should any of our members print or publish any writing, against the advice of the meeting for sufferings, or which tends to excite disunity and discord amongst us, they should be treated with ; and, if they cannot be convinced of the impropriety of their conduct, and condemn the same to the satisfaction of the monthly meeting, they should be disowned.

It is incumbent on parents and heads of families, to prevent, as much as possible, all those under their direction, from perusing publications which may tend to weaken their confidence in the christian religion, or which may excite doubts concerning the authenticity of the Scriptures, and those important truths declared in them ; lest their inexperienced minds should be poisoned thereby, and a foundation be laid for the greatest evils.

It is also enjoined on all the members of our religious society, to discourage and suppress the reading of plays, romances, and all other corrupting books that have a tendency to awaken and invigorate those evil propensities "which war against the soul," and which it is the duty, as well as interest, of every christian mind to keep in subjection.

Printers and booksellers in membership with us, are cautioned against printing, selling, or lending such books.

SCHOOLS.

As it is important that suitable schools for the right education of our youth should be established, Friends are advised to cherish a liberal disposition, and to make such provision as may encourage well-qualified persons to engage in this arduous employment. For want of teachers of this description, there is reason to apprehend, that children have sometimes been committed to the care of persons, whose example and influence have betrayed them into principles and habits, which have had an injurious effect on them in more advanced life.

Friends should endeavor to procure teachers of our own religious profession, who are not only qualified to instruct the youth in school-learning, but to co-operate with the society in their religious endeavors to excite in them a love of virtue, and to afford them the good example of a conduct consistent with our principles.

Friends are desired to be careful in the choice of suitable school-books, and to select such as are calculated to direct the susceptible and tender minds of youth, in the pursuit of piety and virtue ; and it is earnestly advised, that the Scriptures of Truth be frequently read in our schools.

For the promotion of these desirable objects, it is recommended to preparative meetings, or, when their situation is such as to prevent it, to monthly meetings, to open subscriptions for permanent school funds, to be placed under the care of committees, in order that more attention may be given to the religious education of the youth of our society; and it is earnestly desired, that Friends may be increasingly impressed with the importance of this incumbent duty.

APPRENTICES.

CHILDREN who are members of our society, should be placed by their parents or guardians, with Friends, unless, after due inquiry, no suitable place can be found ; when application should be made to the monthly meeting for advice, which is to appoint a committee to render the necessary assistance ; and, if a place can be found where the child may be educated agreeably to our profession, the tuition being reserved to the parent or guardian, the monthly meeting is at liberty to act therein as it may judge right.

Should parents or guardians proceed contrary to these directions, they should be treated with, as those who disregard the concern of the society.

It is advised, that Friends who take children or apprentices, give a preference to our own members, and that they be moderate in their terms, that the children of Friends in low circumstances, in an especial manner, may be brought up to such trades and business, as may, with a blessing on their prudence and industry, procure them a comfortable living.

It is the incumbent duty of Friends to instruct all children placed under their care in school-learning, to fit them for business.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

FRIENDS are advised to demean themselves circumspectly towards all men, in the peaceable spirit of the gospel, to avoid political controversies, or giving just occasion of offence to those in government. If we dwell in the principle of Truth, our testimonies will be preferred to every temporal consideration, and the offices of profit and honor in government will neither be sought for, nor accepted by us.

But, should any disregard the concern of the society, and accept a post of profit and honor in government, he is not to be appointed to any services in the church, nor his collections received.

Friends are not to receive unlawful interest, or be concerned in any trade contrary to law ; or in any wise encourage such practices in others.

SUFFERINGS.

As, in support of our christian testimonies, Friends are sometimes brought into suffering, they are tenderly advised and exhorted, when requisitions repugnant to our principles are made, that they do not, by any indirect means, attempt to evade them ; but, in the spirit of meekness, patiently and cheerfully submit ; for by such a temper only, we can show that we suffer for conscience' sake.

Friends should keep an accurate account of their sufferings, specifying the sum, the time when taken, for what, and by whom ; to be handed to, and carefully inspected by, a committee of the monthly meeting ; and, if approved, the particulars are to be recorded in a book kept by the meeting for that purpose : the statement of the amount, and the cause for which it was taken, are to be sent from the monthly to the quarterly and yearly meetings,

WILLS AND DONATIONS.

FRIENDS should be provided with wills, and be careful to renew them as often as occasion may require, and to dispose of their property according to justice ; that it may tend to their satisfaction and peace, and the promotion of harmony in their families. They are advised, on such occasions, as a prudent measure, to consult some of their judicious friends with respect to the disposition of their estates.

The making of suitable wills in time of health, may prevent the subject from claiming attention on a sick bed, when the mind should not be diverted from a solemn consideration of the awful period of life.

As much may depend on the confidential trust of executorship, both with respect to a due care of the property, as well as the education and welfare of children in their minority, Friends should be careful in whom they place that important charge.

Persons employed to draft wills, should be of good repute, and have a competent knowledge of the subject. Wills should contain a clause empowering executors to submit to reference, all disputed matters relative to the estate ; and executors and administrators are to have a full, clear, and perfect invent-

ory of the estate made out, as soon as it can be conveniently accomplished.

All concerned in wills and settlements, are advised to a punctual and faithful discharge of their respective trusts, according to the intent of the donors, or testators.

Meetings, concerned in any charitable gifts, legacies, or bequests, for the use of the poor or other purposes of the society, should take special care that they be not appropriated to any other use than such as the donors, or testators, have directed or enjoined, by legal settlement, will, or testament.

MEMORIALS.

To commemorate the lives of the righteous, is a tribute due to their memory, and may prove an incentive to the living, to emulate their virtues. Should a monthly meeting prepare a memorial concerning a deceased member, it may be sent to the quarterly meeting ; and should the quarterly meeting, after careful attention, approve of it, it is to be forwarded to the meeting for sufferings for inspection and correction, and then be laid before the yearly meeting ; unless the meeting for sufferings should, in some instances, deem it inexpedient.

TITLES OF LANDS.

It is recommended to quarterly and monthly meetings, to make timely and careful inspection into the titles of meeting-houses, burial grounds, and other estates, which have been vested in trustees for the use and benefit of the society, or of any of its meetings; that, in case the death of any trustees or other circumstances should render it necessary, seasonable care may be taken to appoint others to the trust, that future difficulties, and the risk of being deprived of such estates, may be avoided. Quarterly and monthly meetings are to keep correct records of all such trusts and conveyances; and also a clear and regular account of the place where, and the persons with whom the papers, minutes, and records, belonging to our religious society, are deposited; and due care should be taken to lodge them with suitable Friends.

THE END.

1676

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